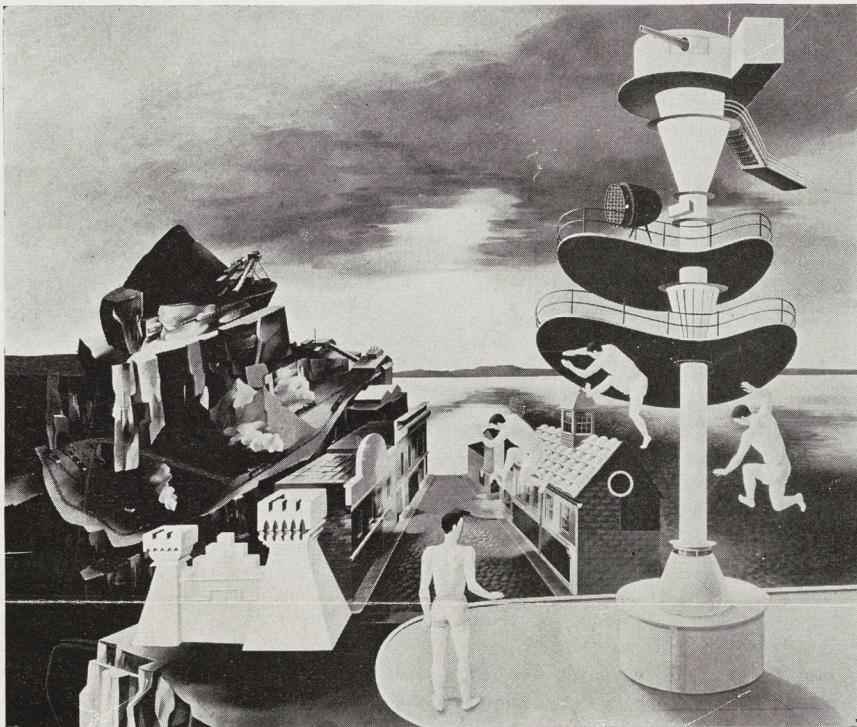


SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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SOUTH OF SCRANTON—by Peter Blume. Awarded first prize, Carnegie International, now showing at San Francisco Museum of Art.

Carnegie International at San Francisco Museum of Art

By RAY BOYNTON

Even though the American section is not complete, this exhibition gives a pretty large cross-section of contemporary painting; mostly contemporary at least, if ten years is not already outmoded. It cannot show any marked concerted effort in any group. It is a large collection of individuals. The greatest unity is perhaps in the stalest examples—the least inspired. One does encounter certainty, however, in the work of individuals who have gone their own way with assurance.

One could wish that the American section was more complete, for it appears to me that certain individuals like Benton are beginning to have an influence. It will be entertaining to see them take in each other's washing for a while rather than continue to do the washing for the French.

The French section does not give one any

sense of inferiority. I am not overcome by any of it. I recall a fine landscape by De-rain which inspires genuine respect, and an Utrillo, whose work has a quality of candor that recalls Van Gogh. I am impressed by a sturdy independence of individuals who haven't changed in thirty years; but there are so many still-life pieces of no particular distinction and tricky paintings of no merit or inspiration. Why drag in a very shabby Raoul Dufy? (He is already being paraded in minor league performance amongst our own.) There have been good ones, I admit, but this one is hopelessly shabby. There is vanDongen with a modish kind of painting without style—merely stylish theatrical claptrap—the kind of painting that is the dealer's joy. There are two or three others worse of the same kind. There is a very beautiful Matisse—almost all

one looks for in Matisse—exquisite sharpness of color and sureness of pattern not much worked on—in fact, brilliant direct painting on a moderately small scale. There is another Matisse which is not half painted, with no color and very ordinary pattern—the kind of thing that is delivered to a dealer to fulfil a contract calling for so many canvases a month. The Dufy is another such example. We solemnly parade them in exhibitions and lecture to a gaping public on the esthetic achievements of French modernism.

It may be entertaining to a certain type of mentality to see Clark Gable in his undershirt with only half his make-up on but it doesn't have very important bearing on the cinema as a vehicle of the drama. Chiefly it is publicity directed toward creating a claque. There is certain unfinished work of Velasquez that reveals his method and an understanding of the freshness of his technique. I have enjoyed seeing Cezanne in his undershirt in certain not half finished watercolors. They reveal the tentative efforts of an oversensitive artist approaching a problem that still baffles him. These things are documents of interest to the artist at times and only confusing to the public. The most illuminating lecture cannot do much more than leave the public still gaping with a muddy idea that this must be very important but it is queer. Museums may thrive on it but art doesn't.

The American scene is with us. In fact, what gives an approach to unity to the American section is the thin stream of idea which the American scene is injecting. But with it is creeping in sentimentality. It is insidious. It inserts its snout in the form of derisive comment in George Biddle's "Folly Beach," where objectivity would have been enough; and in the form of nostalgic recollection of the chromo. The American scene can be brutally frank without offense—Kenneth Hayes Miller's coarse putty faced women "Through the Shop Window"; it can also be gay and objective and healthy—Reginald Marsh's "Show Window," Franklin C. Watkins' "Fire Eater."

A witty Frenchman one time remarked that if Raphael had been shot before he painted any pictures the world might have been spared a great deal of sugary sentimental painting which seemed to derive its authority from him (Bougereau et al.). That is a thing to ponder but I doubt it. Sentimentality is always lurking just around the corner. It is the familiar thing presented without great distinction and purity of design or performance. It is not present in Leonardo nor in

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 1)

Art at the Cross-Roads

By RALPH STACKPOLE

When the old scribes were given the job of writing the Bible they probably went into an immediate huddle and one of them may have said, "Boys, let's get down to the bottom of all this." So the one assigned to do the first book wrote in an easy, seemingly careless manner, "God created the heaven and the earth," and a little later he continued, "He created man in His own image." This scribe, it is needless to say, was a great artist. What he said was the result of thousands of years of human thought and he just wrote it down in an easy, careless manner, for he was sure of what he was saying. He was simply the mouthpiece to record what people had been thinking for long centuries.

Why did God create man in His own image? He couldn't help it. It is the law of all creative work.

As far back as human records go man has made things with nature and himself (which are one) as the model, and the results are what we call art. This art, apart from utility, has been a food for the spirit and as important and necessary to existence as all the other foods.

Up to the present time all man's tools, utensils, dwellings, clothes and weapons were made by hand, and were part of himself. But now machines, with wonderful precision, have come and with sudden swiftness we see hand-made things replaced by machine-made.

In the kitchen where once were utensils of hammered copper we now see cast or spun aluminum; the old carved four-poster bed has given way to the enameled iron bed, and homespun cloth to machine loom materials; the photographic lens now records images that were once drawn and colored by hand. With apparent benefits from the machine we see a breaking down of the system of hand made all along the line. It leaves the artists, craftsmen, creators temporarily bewildered and groping.

This sudden change cannot and will not cripple art always. Take something away, prohibit it, and it is wanted more than ever.

We see around us a mad effort to salvage the art of the past, the hand made, to put it in museums or storehouses; we see, also, an equal effort to find an outlet for the creative forces so deeply rooted within us. As we, and all nature, were created in an easy, hap-hazard way, the perfection of mechanical exactitude will never completely satisfy us. There will always be a yearning for the jug that leans awry. The big job now is to find a



ROSES—by Andre Derain. Awarded Allegheny County Garden Club prize, Carnegie International, now showing at San Francisco Museum of Art.

kind of liberation through the machine. We want more time to make things in our own image. Strange, it seems paradoxical enough, we have made the machine and now we must learn to readjust ourselves to the new qualities and forms of the things she produces.

The ultimate goal, I believe, will be a complete harmony between the machine, which liberates the body, and art, which liberates the spirit.

Second Alumni Dinner

On Wednesday evening, May 1st, the Alumni Association, California School of Fine Arts, will give its second and concluding honorary dinner for this spring. Richard J. Neutra will be guest of honor. Mr. Neutra, internationally recognized as a proponent for modern architecture, recently received the only gold medal award and honorable mention given in the National Better Homes in America contest, in which there were between five and six thousand contestants.

—M. H.

Mural Competition

The Procurement Division of the Treasury Department, Section of Painting and Sculpture, invites competition for two mural groups in the Post Office Building at Stockton, California; also two mural groups in the Post Office at Merced, California.

The first project is estimated to cost \$2,276; the second is estimated to cost \$1,450.

Dr. Walter Heil, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, California, is Chairman of the committees which will be in general charge of the competitions.

A blueprint with dimensions and specifications as to the spaces to be decorated may be obtained from Dr. Heil for reference.

Correction

The BULLETIN wishes to acknowledge an omission in the list of awards, 55th Annual (March issue):

William Clarke received Medal of First Award in Graphic Art.

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Bulletin Editor MILDRED ROSENTHAL
Associate Editor WILLIAM B. HESTHAL
Contributing Editors { RALPH STACKPOLE
Business Manager RAY BOYNTON
PLATT KENT

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Editorial

This issue completes the first volume of the San Francisco Art Association Bulletin. We are now one year old.

The timid messenger that came into being at a meeting of the Artists' Council a year ago has established its place and is becoming, with ever increasing efficacy, the voice of the San Francisco Art Association.

That we have satisfied a need is manifested by the stream of contributions that have filled these pages; some of them, we feel, have had no small part in shaping public thought and terminating discussions that were handicapping the progress of art in our community. It is significant that both a morning and evening daily reprinted Victor Arnautoff's article on the Coit Tower (September, 1934) and that soon thereafter the tower was opened to the public. Of interest, also, was the generous response of our Southern contemporaries, "The California Art News" (Los Angeles) and the Los Angeles art weekly, "Saturday Night," both of which carried stories on the opening of our new galleries, including the cut as published in our November issue. Other articles, including Mr. Boynton's "Why Fresco" (June, 1934), also appeared subsequently in the Sunday art pages of our local press.

In reviewing our brief existence, we encounter an element of quiet drama. Originally conceived to serve the membership of our association, we now carry the activities of our group to all the recognized art centers in our country.

Our exchange, which is now in process of development, includes museums and galleries and will include centers of education and culture. Our mailing list has embraced the Alumni Association of the California School of Fine Arts and our present issues of 1000 copies double in number the original editions.

It is the idea of the Board of Directors of the Art Association to increase the circulation as conditions warrant; it is the purpose of the editorial staff to maintain the original policy of the Bulletin to include discussions

on art and related subjects that are "stimulating and vital."

The development of this sheet has been coincident with the most distinguished year in the history of the Art Association. It has been our privilege to record the opening of the Association's San Francisco Museum of Art, which included the Art Association's 55th Annual and the Collection of French Moderns. This issue reviews the Carnegie International (now hanging) and the next deals with the small, but invaluable, Chinese Collection. We have also recorded the Art Association's third parilia, the magnificent Pre-Columbian Pageant-Ball, which will become an annual civic affair for the purpose of helping to sustain the new museum.

The editor takes this opportunity of acknowledging the support and enthusiasm of the President and Board of Directors of the Art Association, and of thanking the following contributors whose articles have been responsible for the prestige of the San Francisco Art Association Bulletin:

Arthur Millier, Victor Arnautoff, Ray Boynton, Lee Randolph, William Hesthal, Moya Del Pino, Nelson Poole, Rinaldo Cuneo, Lucien Labaudt, Gertrude Partington Albright, Richard Tobin, Ralph Stackpole, Marian Hartwell, Helen Forbes, Bruce Porter, Jeanne Bierty Salinger, Roi Partridge, Dr. Grace McCann Morley, Worth Ryder, Junius Cravens, Glenn Wessels, Timothy Pflueger, Sargent Johnson and Curran Swint.

We wish also to thank Mrs. Harriet Wheodon and Miss Claudia Davis for their contributions, which have appeared as news.

A Request

The Art School needs many draperies of all sizes and colors as backgrounds for the models and still life arrangements. Nothing could answer the purpose better than old pieces of materials, which usually accumulate about the house, and which often have a color quality and texture much preferable to any new materials we might buy. Old curtains, dresses which no longer have a "make over" value, a table cover you are tired of looking at—these things possess character because they were useful, they fall in fine folds, they have a saturated color from exposure to light. They are the aristocrats of the rag bag.

We will appreciate any draperies that have served their usefulness to you. We will put them to a new use.

LEE F. RANDOLPH,
Director of the School.

April Exhibitions in Local Galleries

Amberg-Hirth, 165 Post Street: Collection of stone pottery by Glen Luken, head of pottery department at University of Southern California.

The Art Center, 730 Montgomery Street: Tempera and watercolors by John Haley from April 8 to April 20.—Oils and watercolors by Victor Arnautoff from April 22 to May 4.

California Palace of the Legion of Honor: Monthly Art Exhibition by Californians changing April 15.—Fourth Annual Exhibition of Progressive Painters of Southern California, April 1 through April 30.—Exhibition of Paintings by East Bay Artists, April 20 to May 20.—Art Work by Pupils in the San Francisco High Schools, April 26 to May 26.—Arts and Crafts by Pupils in the San Francisco Junior High Schools, closing April 24.

Courvoisier Galleries, 480 Post Street: Exhibition of watercolors by Millard Sheets.—Exhibition of oils by Schofield.

M. H. deYoung Memorial Museum: Yo-

semite in Four Seasons, photographs by Ansel Adams opening April 7.

The Paul Elder Gallery, 239 Post Street: Gouaches by Carlos Morida from April 1 to April 13.

Gump Galleries, 246 Post Street: Prints by American artists to April 14.—Lithographs of Boulder Dam by Woolletts from April 14 to April 30.—Exhibition, California Society of Etchers from May 1 to 15.

San Francisco Museum of Art, Civic Center: Carnegie International Exhibition closing April 25.

Sierra Club: Sierra Mountain watercolors by Malcolm Smith from April 1 to April 27.

Roy Vernon Sowers, 451 Post Street: Original drawings by early Italian masters from April 1 to April 15.—Old Japanese figure prints from April 15 to April 30.

Bay Region Art Association: Watercolors by William Cameron, March 20 to April 18, Capwell, Sullivan and Furth Bldg., Oakland.

Carnegie International

(Continued from Page 2, Col. 1)

Botticelli, although the paraphernalia is all there, and both might be put in the same category by the Frenchman's wit—but not quite—because both have that great distinction and authority in every line which is not always present in Raphael. I think it behooves all of us who fondle the American scene to reflect on that and not to imitate quite so persuasively the chromo or the Currier and Ives of no distinction except for the collector.

There are two good examples of the Currier and Ives school of landscape in the American section. You can't miss them. I do not need to name them. Henry Poor's "Icy Ravine" is not one of them; it has all of the paraphernalia but it has also great distinction of design and great dignity. "South of Scranton" is not one of them; it is a very distinguished performance.

There isn't a very near contender for first place in the show. (Henry Poor is, in my estimation, the nearest.) "South of Scranton" enthralls you with the perfection of its objective realization of things. It is so absolutely final in every statement. Its technical assumptions are carried to inevitable conclusion—to relentless conclusion. That finality is almost breath-taking in its robustness. Yes, I am impressed by it. Even its ugliness is beautiful. I do not follow Peter Blume's mental processes. I do not even have to. I am impressed by the results. Why do people find it

so strange? I have seen in Russian ikons form realized as beautifully as that; and what about the strange and weird vistas of caverns and rocks and unbelievable things one meets in Leonardo's and in the German and Flemish medieval composing? The only thing that is ever new in art is the environment and ideas that evoke it.

One can honestly say that a great deal of this exhibition is just boring. That is so true of most big exhibitions that their general effect is depressing. At the entrance of the Spanish room one is greeted by what looks like fragments of the famous ceiling of the auditorium of the California Palace of the Legion of Honor. It requires persistence to penetrate far enough into the room to see the Spanish painting. In general one might say that an esthetic argument on a ten-foot canvas is a more pretentious bore than it would be in a more modest size. After thirty years or more of esthetic wrangling it is doubtful if easel painting can ever again recover unity in more than small local groups. It has become the vehicle of individualism, but we can still enjoy it piecemeal in that fashion.

\$100 Prize for Book-Plate

The San Francisco Museum of Art announces a competition for a book-plate, to be used in books presented by Mr. Albert M. Bender to the Museum Library. The lettering must read: "Library of the San Francisco Museum of Art—Albert M. Bender Collection." Designs must be received June 1st.

SAN FRANCISCO ART ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

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